

Message Text

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PAGE 01 OSLO 03332 080809Z

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PASS ASST SEC BLACKWELL

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SUBJ: PRESS INTERVIEWS

TRANSLATIONS BY EMBASSY OF INTERVIEWS IN OSLO WITH DOC ASSISTANT
SECRETARY BLACKWELL AND NORWAY'S NEW SHIPPING ATTACHE TO WASHINGTON,
ALF BERGESEN, AS CARRIED BY THE "NORGES HANDELS OG SJOFARTS
TIDENDE" ON ITS FRONT PAGE ON 6 JULY 1976 FOLLOW:

1. INTERVIEW WITH ASSISTANT SECRETARY BLACKWELL

"USA'S ASSISTANT SECRETARY: THE WEST MUST STAND
TOGETHER AGAINST SOVIET SHIPPING POLICY.

"THERE ARE SIGNS OF GROWING UNDERSTANDING AMONG WESTERN
SHIPPING NATIONS FOR A MORE MARKED COMMON FRONT AGAINST
SOVIET SHIPPING POLICY. IT IS, HOWEVER, PRIMARILY IN SHIPPING
QUARTERS THERE IS CONCERN OVER SOVIET RATE-CUTTING,
IT WOULD BE DESIRABLE IF GREATER INTEREST IN THIS
PROBLEM WOULD ALSO BE SHOWN IN GOVERNMENT QUARTERS IN THESE
SHIPPING COUNTRIES.

"IT WAS THE AMERICAN ASSISTANT SECRETARY, ROBERT BLACKWELL
UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 02 OSLO 03332 080809Z

IN THE U.S. MARITIME COMMISSION, WHO SAID THIS TO NHST AFTER

THE MEETING HE HAD YESTERDAY WITH MINISTER OF TRADE HALLVARD BAKKE AND WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE SHIPPING COMPANIES, SHIYARDS, DEPARTMENTS, ETC. ON SUNDAY HE HAD A TALK WITH THE PRESIDENT OF THE NORWEGIAN SHIPOWNERS FEDERATION, CHARLES BERGESEN, IN STAVANGER.

"MR BLACKWELL IS IN EUROPE TO DISCUSS SHIPPING INTERESTS IN THE COUNTRIES HERE. HE VISITED GREAT BRITIAN, WEST GERMANY, AND DENMARK RECENTLY AND TODAY HE IS GOING ON TO STOCKHOLM.

"A COUPLE OF WEEKS AGO HE WAS ALSO IN MOSCOW, AND AT YESTERDAY'S MEETING IN OSLO HE GAVE A BRIEFING ON THE NEGOTIATIONS WHICH WERE CONDUCTED IN MOSCOW. IT WAS POINTED OUT TO THE RUSSIANS THAT ONE WOULD LIKE TO GET A GENERAL SIVIET-AMERICAN AGREEMENT WHICH COULD REDUCE THE PROBLEMS THAT HAVE ARISEN BY RUSSIAN COMPANIES OFFERING RATES CONSIDERABLY BELOW CONFIRENCE LEVELS. HOWEVER, ON THE SOVIET SIDE THEY REPLIED THEY DID NOT WANT A GENERAL AGREEMENT BUT WERE WILLING TO DISCUSS THE PROBLEMS "ON A COMMERCIAL BASIS" FOR EACH LINE SEPARATELY. THE RUSSIANS THUS THOUGHT THE NORTH ATLANTIC MUST BE A NATURAL PLACE TO START, SINCE THE DISTANCE BETWEEN THE COMPETITORS IS NOT TO LARGE THERE. ON BOTH SIDES IN THE MOSCOW MEETINGS IT WAS FURTHERMORE AGREED THAT IT WOULD BE FAR MORE DIFFICULT TO REACH AN ARRANGEMENT FOR U.S. PACIFIC-JAPAN DUE TO THE LARGE NUMBER OF LINES, THE BIG TONNAGE AND THE MANY PROBLEMS INVOLVED THERE. PERSONALLY I THINK NEGOTIATIONS"ON A COMMERCIAL BASIS/ BETWEEN WESTERN SHIPOWNERS AND WHAT MOSCOW CALLS "SOVIET RUSSIAN SHIPOWNERS" UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES WILL BE A VERY TIME CONSUMING JOB WHICH COULD TAKE SEVERAL YEARS, EVEN THOUGH THE IDEA AT A FIRST GLANCE APPEARS BOTH SENSIBLE AND PRACTICAL.

"DURING MY MEETINGS IN WESTERN EUROPE I HAVE QUITE A WIDE WESTERN EUROPEAN AGREEMENT AS REGARDS ASPECTS OF AMERICAN SHIPPING POLICY, MR. BLACKWELL SAID, IT WOULD BE NATURAL TO HAVE AS WIDE AND GREATER AGREEMENT TO STAND TOGETHER AGAINST UNFAIR SOVIET COMPETITION ON THE SEAS AND, THE METHODS THE RUSSIANS APPLY TO ATTRACT CARGO. DISCUSSIONS IN OECD INDICATE THERE IS SUCH AGREEMENT AND THE DISCUSSIONS I UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 OSLO 03332 080809Z

HAVE ALSO HAD INDICATE A CERTAIN INTEREST IN A COMMON APPROACH. THAT A GROUP OF WESTERN EUROPEAN SHIPOWNERS IS GOING TO LENINGRAD IN TWO WEEKS' TIME IS YET ANOTHER SIGN. WE ARE NOT AGAINST RUSSIAN COMPETITION, BUT IT MUST BE FAIR, ASSISTANT SECRETARY BLACKWELL SAID."

2. INTERVIEW WTIIH ALF BERGESEN:

"SHIPPING, MY MAJOR FIELD OF ACTIVITY-SAS THE NEW COUNSELOR OF EMBASSY IN EASIINGTON, ALF BERGESEN.

"AS OF TOMORROW THE NAME OF NORWAY'S COUNSELOR OF EMBASSY IN WASHINGTO WILL BE ALF BERGESEN, WHO SUCCEEDS BJARNE GRINDEM, NOW AMBASSADOR TO SAUDI ARABIA.

"ALF BERGESEN (50) WHO HAS BEEN HEAD OF DIVISION IN THE MINISTRY OF TRADE SINCE 1971 AND CHIEF OF THE SHIPPING POLICY OFFICE THERE, SAID IN AN INTERVIEW WITH "NHST" JUST BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE THAT HE IS LOOKING FORWARD TO THIS POST IN THE FOREIGN SERVICE.

"MY MAIN FUNCTIONS IN THE MINISTRY OF TRADE HAVE BEEN RELATED TO SHIPPING POLICY ISSUES, INTER ALIA OUR SHIPPING POLICY RELATIONS WITH THE OECD STATES, CONSULTATIVE SHIPPING GROUP AND THE DEVELOPMENT COUNTRIES, IN BRIEF-SOUR INTERNATIONAL SHIPPING POLICY CONNECTIONS IN THE MARITIME AREA ALL OVER THE WORLD, HE SAID, AND IN THIS CONTEXT THE USA IS OF GREAT IMPORTANCE, AS THE USA IS A MAJOR MARKET FOR NORWEGIAN SHIPPING SERVICE. BECAUSE THE USA IS SUCH A BIG CUSTOMER IT IS CLEAR THAT THE SHIPPING POLICY FOLLOWED BY AMERICAN AUTHORITIES IS OF THE GREATEST IMPORTANCE-NOT ONLY TO AMERICAN SHIPOWNERS AND SHIPPERS, BUT TO INTERNATIONAL SHIPPING IN GENERAL. THERE IS, AS YOU KNOW, SOMETHING CALLED THE POWER OF EXAMPLE. THE IMPORTANCE TO NORWEGIAN SHIPPING IS EVIDENT FROM THE FACT THAT AT ALL TIMES ABOUT 30 PER CENT OF THE NORWEGIAN MERCHANT FLEET OR SOMEWHAT OVER SIX MILLION GROSS REGULAR TONS ARE ENGAGED IN TRADES TO OR FROM AMERICAN PORTS.

"THROUGH THE AGES NORWAY AND THE USA HAVE NOT ALWAYS BEEN IN ACCORD AS REGARDS SHIPPING POLICY ISSUES. THE BACKGROUND FOR THIS IS THT THE USA HAS NOT ACCEPTED THE OECD LIBERALIZATION CODE WHICHIS THE PHILOSOPHICAL BASIS FOR THE COOPERATION BETWEEN THE WESTERN COUNTRIES IN THE SHIPPING UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 OSLO 03332 080809Z

SECTOR- THIS AGAIN IS CONNECTED WITH THE FACT THAT THE USA-BEING VERY IMPORTANT GREAT POWER-HAS HAD SOME STATUORY PREFERENCE PROVISIONS, WHICH SECURE FOR AMERICAN SHIPS TRANSPORTATION OF CERTAIN CATEGORIES OF AMERICAN CARGOS, BERGESEN SAID. THIS HAS BEEN A PROBLEM, BUT IN MANY RESPECTS WE NOW SEEM TO FEEL AN IMPROVEMENT IN THE CLIMATE BETWEEN THE USA AND NORWAY-WE HAVE SEEN THIS REPEATEDLY IN INTERNATIONAL CONTEXTS. THIS PARTLY ATTRIBUTED TO THE CHANGE IN SHIPPING CONDITIONS IN THE ORLD. I THINK OUR POLICY ON THE WHOLE HAS BEEN UNCHANGED AND THAT THE SAME MAY BE SAID OF THE AMERICAN, BUT CONDITIONS HAVE CHANGED SO THAT IN MANY RESPECTS WE HAVE FOLLOWED THE SAMELINE. AMERICAN SHIPPING POLICY, LIKE OURS, HAS A BASIC PRINCIPLE WHICH IS LIBERAL IN THE SENSE THAT WE WANT TO SEE THE GREATEST POSSIBLE DEGREE OF COMPETITION. IN CONNECTION WITH MY TAKING

OVER THE POST IN WASHINGTON IT HAS BEEN MADE QUITE CLEAR
TO ME THAT SHIPPING IS A SPHERE OF ACTIVITY ON WHICH GREAT
IMPORTANCE WILL BE PLACED IN THE EMBASSY. WE ARE PREPARED
TO HELP LOOK AFTER THE INTERESTS OF NORWEGIAN AUTHORITIES
AND SHIPPING SECTOR OVER THERE, VIS-A-VIS THE USA. THOSE
WHO HAVE PROBLEMS WHICH THEY THINK THE EMBASSY CAN HELP
SOLVE MUST KNOW THAT THE DOOR IS ALWAYS OPEN.
"THE NEW COUNSELOR ALSO TOLD US THAT DURING THE LAST
DAYS PRIOR TO HIS DEPARTURE FROM NORWAY HE PAID VISITS
TO SOME NORWEGIAN SHIPPING COMPANIES, AND THAT THEY BRIEFED
HOM ON THEIR TRAFFIC PATTERNS AND THE KINDS OF PROBLEMS
THAT MAY BE EXPECTED. PRIMARILY IT SEEMS TO BE A QUESTION
OF PROBLEMS CONNECTED WITH AMERICAN REGULATION LEGISLATION
AND REGULATION ACTIVITY."
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